

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DJIBOU 01296 060538Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SP-02 PM-05
DODE-00 EB-08 TRSE-00 DOE-15 DOEE-00 /088 W
-----120371 060545Z /14

O P 311345Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1199

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SANA PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

S E C R E T DJIBOUTI 1296

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, PINS, ET

SUBJ: SHELLING OF REFINERY IN ASSAB

1. FRENCH MILITARY SOURCES DJIBOUTI REPORT FIRING ON SHELL
REFINERY IN ASSAB DURING NIGHT OF 28-29 AUGUST. ACCORDING TO
OVERHEARD ETHIOPIAN COMMUNICATIONS, FIRING CAME FROM DIRECTION
OF THE SEA, WAS PROBABLY 57 MILIMETER SOVIET
MADE ANTI-AIRCRAFT CANNON, EITHER MOUNTED ON A SMALL SHIP OR
TEMPORARILY PLACED ON ONE OF ISLANDS OUTSIDE THE ASSAB HARBOR.
ETHIOPIANS REPLIED TO FIRING WITH ANTI-AIRCRAFT SHELLS. OF
FOUR ETHIOPIAN PATROL BOATS IN ASSAB, NONE WERE AVAILABLE FOR
RIPOSTE. THREE HAD ENGINES WITHOUT OIL AND ONE WITH ENGINE
WITHOUT PISTONS.

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2. ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS APPARENTLY MADE NO PUBLIC MENTION
OF INCIDENT TO DATE. HOWEVER, CERTAIN OVERHEARD COMMUNICATIONS
INDICATE THEIR BELIEF THAT SOMALIS ARE RESPONSIBLE. FRENCH
BELIEVE THAT ACTION PROBABLY OF ERITREA LIBERATION GROUP
ORIGIN, WITH GUN MOUNTED ON BOUTRE (DHOW) OR ON SMALL
CRAFT OF SOME KIND. FRENCH ALSO DO NOT KNOW HOW ETHIOPIANS

CAN BE SO CERTAIN THAT INCOMING ROUNDS WERE 57MM CALIBRE.
FRENCH DOUBT THAT SOMALIS HAVE BOATS WHICH COULD CARRY OUT
SUCH A RAID.

3. RAID CAUSED LITTLE OR NO DAMAGE TO REFINERY. ANY OTHER
DAMAGES NOT KNOWN. FRENCH ARE A LITTLE CONCERNED THAT
ETHIOPIANS MIGHT BLAME INCIDENT ON THEM BECAUSE THEY HAVE A
PATROL IN IMMEDIATE REGION.

4. OTHER REPORTS INDICATE A CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT
INTERPRETATION OF THIS EPISODE. POST WILL COMMENT SEPTTEL.
CLARKE

NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, COMBAT OPERATIONS, REFINERIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DJIBOU01296
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780362-0352
Format: TEL
From: DJIBOUTI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978085/aaaaadmz.tel
Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4fef6f61-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1697409
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHELLING OF REFINERY IN ASSAB
TAGS: MOPS, PBOR, PINS, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4fef6f61-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014